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ABSTRACT

This curriculum guide is the result of stories that students in workplace education classes have created in class and chosen to publish. The learners for whom this curriculum is designed are adult students voluntarily enrolled in a workplace education class in which the focus is literacy or basic skills training. Contents include the following: syllabus; philosophy; forms to design a profile of oneself as a writer and a writing self-assessment; possible interview questions for the teacher; guidelines to enable teachers to support, nurture, and value students' own voices by creating an environment where they can be heard; information on published materials that are nontraditional for classroom use; revision and a checklist for revision; types of writing such as free writing, autobiography, and interview; motivation for writing; techniques for title writing; assessment of one's own writing; use of portfolios; teacher form for evaluating student writing; form for a student's self reflection; holistic scoring guide; a chart on using literacy to make change; progress checklist; and student evaluation of course. The stories of students published in Writers at Work are used throughout the guide to illustrate concepts. (YLB)

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Writing Our Stories:
Celebrating Authorship with *Writers-at-Work*

by Linda J. Evans

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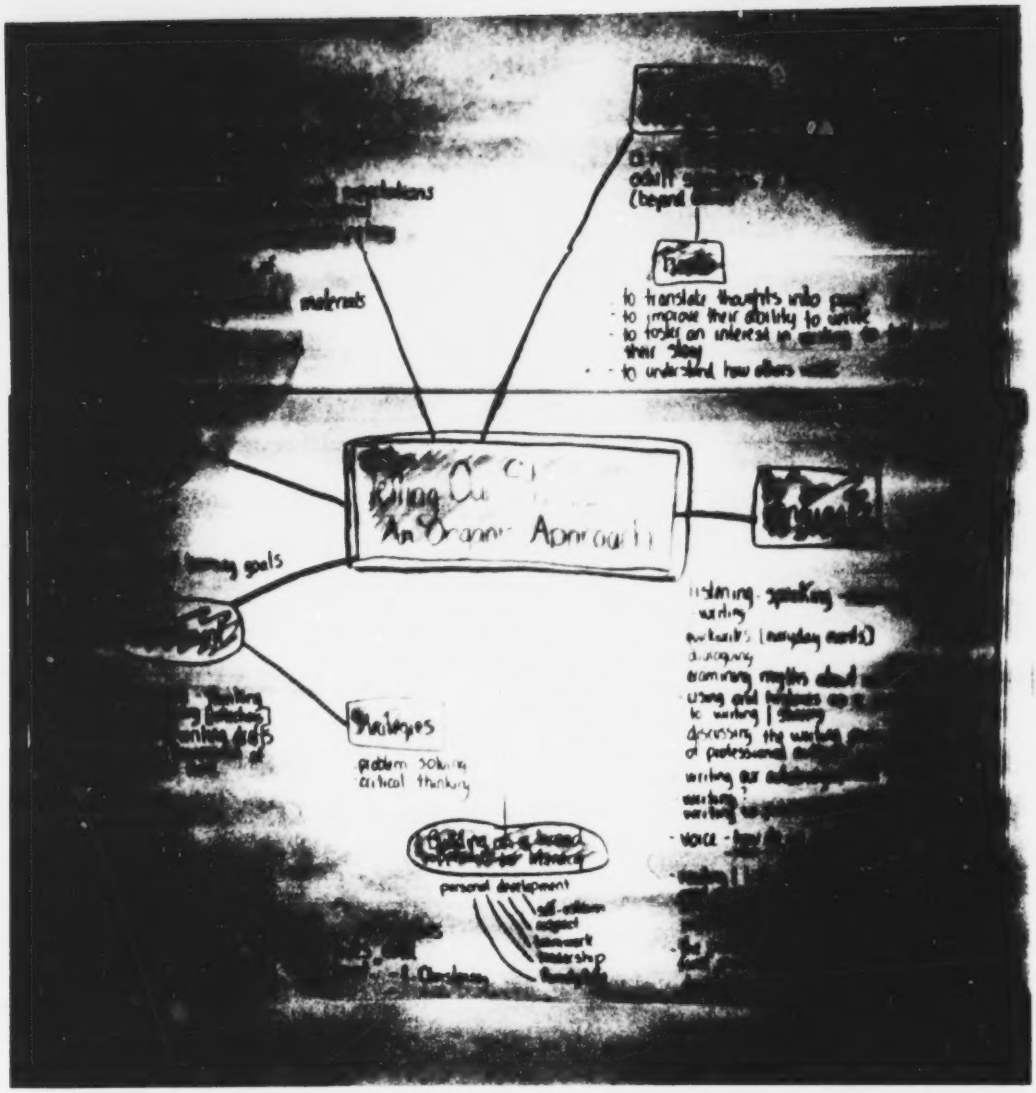
Acknowledgment

This curriculum results from the stories that students in workplace education classes have created in class and chosen to publish. Stories are the springboard from which we can share our own powerful tales, discover our voices and learn about one another. The writers have shared their stories which now are permanent records of one period of their lives. Some authors have even chosen to read their stories aloud to others and speak about what it has meant to write, tell and publish their stories.

I thank each of the contributing authors of *Writers at Work* for helping me bring meaning to my personal commitment to writing and to reaffirm the truth that we all have a story to tell.



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Situation Analysis:

The focus of instruction at the worksite is literacy or basic skills training. Classes are offered as an opportunity for employees to improve the fundamental skills of reading, writing, English as a second language --with job-related emphasis in each area on problem solving, learning and other critical thinking skills. The benefits to both individual and companies are described as measurable improvements in: self-esteem and confidence, attendance, participation, job-training outcomes, adaptability to new technology and changes in organizational structure, error/rework/scrap reduction, success in cross-training, promotability, career or educational advancement.

Approach:

Instruction in the workplace is different from instruction in the usual classroom. Many employees represent non-traditional students, in that they have not been in a "school" setting for most of their adult lives and often have serious doubts about their abilities to learn and succeed in such an environment. In this setting, the Casco Bay Partnership provides an educational program guided by the following principles:

1) that adults bring a rich array of experience, knowledge, motivation and expectations to a learning situation --and thus benefit from an instructional method that promotes learner driven curriculum, continuous reflection upon individual learning styles, strategies and gains, and performance-based objectives and outcomes;

2) that employees come to workplace training with issues and attitudes about their jobs that may adversely affect their success in the classroom--and thus the program must create a learning environment that builds trust, respect and clearly defined learning goals. To this end, classes are voluntary. The partnership aims to model a participatory approach in all aspects of program development.

Learner(s):

The learners for whom this curriculum is being designed are adult students voluntarily enrolled in a workplace education class. A mix of native and non-native speakers of English are students in the class. The difference in varying abilities (to read and write) exist as much between the native speakers as between the native speaker and the ESL student. The ESL students have attained CALP; the speakers of the target language for the most part represent individuals who fell through the cracks in high school - a place where they were not engaged in learning or in any way in charge of their learning. Through a process of a needs assessment a customized curriculum is developed. Workplace programs must be custom-designed to fit the participants' interests as well as the needs of the job. It follows that adults learn best from materials that are interesting and meaningful to them. Literacy development needs to move beyond the survival

stage to levels of empowerment and human development. The ESL students in the class have, for the most part, already taken a host of ESL classes, beginning with survival English and a blend of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing activities to a point where their basic interpersonal communicative skills have been significantly developed in classes where typically teachers combine a reductionist approach to teaching with also a constructivist philosophy.

This curriculum is constructivist in nature-

"Individuals use literacy to gain a deeper and more adequate understanding of themselves and the world."

Kazemek

Scribner's view of "ideal literacy":

- **"the adult in this ideal literacy environment can do more than decode or recognize words and read simple, essential materials. He reads, comprehends, thinks critically, and acts. He functions in his immediate environment, participates in the life of his community or the larger society and perceives of himself as becoming enriched as a person."**

An offshoot of this curriculum development is an interesting study (hot off the press) that links parents' educational levels with the children's success in school. According to an IEA Reading Literacy study --as American schools prepare their students for the global information age, the children of poorly educated parents are lagging behind the children of better educated parents. The study reinforces our conviction that educating adults helps children, too -- in concrete, measurable ways. Adult educators have always known this, but what's more important is that adult learners themselves know it better than any 'expert' observer. That's why so many adults are going back to school -- for the sake of their children.

curriculum grounded in lives of the students
personal writing ← student initiated writing
autobiographical
using participant generated material to enable • empower • enrich •
Integrated reading & writing
Student's lives as a
writing to share – developing ideas – drafting
published students share their stories
Writing to publish
Celebrating the author's voice
develop multicultural awareness
Language Awareness
Content based instruction
Process writing
Writing to publish? personal development - self-esteem - respect - teamwork - family life
Literacy for real purposes and authentic audiences
drawing on adults prior knowledge + experiences
Participatory Approach: what is important to the students is at the heart of the instructional process

Adult learning theory

- self-directed learning
- experience centered
- relates to learners real needs
- directed by learners themselves

Content

- meaning-centered
- content based instruction

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Syllabus Workplace Writing

I. Why write?

1)What do you hope to learn from this class?
2)Why do people write?
3)What can we gain from writing? How are our lives changed?

II. What is good writing?

1)Who judges, who's in control, the social rules of language.
2)Content, form and expression
3)The writing process.

III. Finding our voices

1)Who am I and what do I care about?
2)What do I have to say and how am I going to say it?
3)The humiliation of writing. Mechanics
4)The power of writing.

IV. Writing to make meaning

1)Writing to tell our stories
2)Writing as a process of discovery (about ourselves and others)
3)Writing to publish our stories? What authors from *Writers-at-Work* have to say - what is the importance for the learner?
- what is the importance for the worksite?
- what is the importance for the partnership?

4)What do the famous authors say about their writing/ publishing?

V. What is good writing?

1)Taking ownership of my writing. Letting my voice be heard.

VI. Why write?

1)What did I learn?
2)What didn't I learn? Where do I go from here?
Setting new goals for my learning.

"A teacher cannot build a community of learners unless the voices and lives of the students are an integral part of the curriculum."

Bob Peterson

- curriculum grounded in the lives of student's
- dialogue
- a questioning problem-posing approach
- an emphasis on critiquing bias and attitudes

Philosophy

-when the content is related to students' lives - both the quantity and quality of their reading and writing increase significantly.

- reading, writing, speaking and grammar should be integrated making it easier for students to monitor, internalize and transfer appropriate usage.

- interest and engagement are greater when students are involved in determining the content of the curriculum.

- when students work together they are able to read and write more conceptually complex and linguistically sophisticated pieces.

Writing, more than any other literacy activity, empowers the learner by giving life and credence to their experiences, thoughts and ideas. Writing in order to tell our stories helps to build aspirations, connects people and builds community and tolerance.

This curriculum is designed as a means of enabling learners to think about their writing, finding out what they want to say and as a process of coming to a final piece of writing. It is writing as a means of discovery and the importance of maintaining our own voice. The importance of publishing is underscored by workplace authors who share what it has meant for them to write and to publish.

Quotations of authors and researchers in the field of literacy form the cornerstones of a curriculum that is truly grounded in the lives of the students in the class while encompassing a broad based approach to literacy.

~~Designing a Profile of Yourself as a Writer~~

~~When we learn about the writing processes of others, we gain a better understanding of how we write. We see that there is more than just one way to write - that we all have certain conditions under which we write. Think about your own writing process.~~

Why I write _____

_____

How I write _____

_____

What I like about writing _____

_____

What I dislike about writing _____

_____

Where I get my ideas to write about _____

_____

Times I write _____

_____

What is important to me as a writer _____

_____

What I am good at _____

_____

What I have trouble with _____

_____

What I need to know about writing _____

_____

How I have been taught to write _____

_____

Writing Self-Assessment

Check the ones that you have difficulty with:

- thinking of what to write about
- having enough time to write
- knowing where to begin
- organizing ideas
- keeping on the topic
- thinking of the right words
- grammar
- punctuation
- spelling

Which of the above would you like to work on the most?

Can you ever talk a lot about a topic and yet find yourself unable to write about it? Why do you think this happens?

When do you have time to write in your daily life? What was the last thing you wrote?

Do you usually use a dictionary when you come to an unfamiliar word or one that is difficult to spell?

In what ways do you think writing is different from reading?

List some topics that you would be interested in writing about:

"As teachers we have
daily opportunities to
affirm that our students'
lives and language
are unique and important."

Linda Christensen

Possible Interview Questions

Students' background

- Where are you from?
- What was your first language?
- What other languages do you speak?
- Do you have family here?
- Do you have children? How many?
- How old are they? What are their names? Where do they go to school? What grades are they in?

Employment

- Did you work in your country? What kind of work did you do?
- What kind of work do you do here? Is there another kind of job that you would like to do?

Education

- Did you go to school in your country? For how long?
- Did your parents go to school?
- What are schools like in your country?
- Are you teaching anyone anything now? (sewing/ driving/ sports)?
- Are you teaching your children your first language? What else are you teaching them?
- What kinds of things would you like to learn in this class?
- What do you hope to be able to do with better English? How do you think learning to read and write in English will change your life?
- How do you think your family will feel as your English gets better?

Conceptions about literacy

- Do most people know how to read and write in your country?
- How is reading taught in your country?

Reading:

- Do you like to read? Why/ why not?
- Do you read at home? What do you read? When do you read?
- What language or languages do you read in?
- What kinds of things do you read in your first language? in English?
- Do you read at work? What kinds of things do you read?
- Is it easy or hare for you to read in your first language? in English?
- Do you think you are a good reader? Why/ why not?
- What is the hardest thing about learning to read in English for you?
- Do you know anyone who is a good reader? What makes that person a good reader?

Writing:

- Do you like to write? Why/ why not?
- Do you write at home? What do you write? When do you write?
- What language or languages do you write in?
- What kinds of things do you write in each language?
- Do you think you are a good writer? why/ why not?
- What is the hardest thing about learning to write for you?
- Do you know someone who is a good writer? What makes that person a good writer? What does that person do?

Support systems:

- What do you do when you have trouble reading or writing something?
- Does anyone help you? Who?
- Do you help anyone with reading and writing? Who?
- Do you think it's important to read and write in both your first language and in English?
- Do your want your children to learn to read and write in your first language?

"Writing can be a lifeline,
especially when your existence
has been denied, especially when you
have been left on the margins, especially
when your life and process of growth have
been subjected to attempts
at strangulation."

Micere Mugo (Kenyan poet)

"We cannot give our students rich lives, but we can give them the lens to appreciate the richness that is already there in their lives."

Lucy Calkins
Living Between the Lines

"If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place."

Margaret Mead

Building a community of writers

- **Storytelling through cultural artifacts**
- **Personalizing our lives through the power of story**
- **Sharing stories told by 'authors' from *Writers-at-Work***
- **Storytelling activities for generating language development**

Telling Our Stories:

-elicit personal experience in context with subject
-sharing your story; a common experience
-dialogue
-stories as a pathway to understanding and trust in the classroom
-story as a bridge to writing
-knowing that the stories we tell are important
-storytelling as a tool for communicating

"The voice is the element over which you have no control: its the sound of the person behind the work."

John Hersey

According to Maura Stetson, teachers can support, nurture and value students' own voices by creating an environment where they can be heard. Distilling these thoughts into some general guidelines, she suggests the following ideas:

- **Teach students to recognize institutional voice and how to amend it.** Distribute copies of passages containing authentic and institutional voice. Student peer groups then can discuss the various effects each piece has on them and, as a group, rewrite the passages in a more authentic and effective tone.

- **Allow student choice in essay topics.**

- **Develop with students ongoing lists of possible audiences for their writing.**

- **Connect, connect, connect!** Start with writing and suggest connections with literature that students are currently reading or might find interesting to read.

- **Survey students frequently for questions they've encountered** about their writing and conduct both mini-lessons and individual conferences to address these issues.

- **Know your students and respect their concerns.** Listen attentively and point out and summarize back to them what you hear them saying.

- In order for students to literally "hear" their own voice, **have students read their own writing into a tape recorder** and play the passage back. Students then can recognize whether their writing sounds authentic or flat.

The voice from the text:

We read a written text and hear the writer.

And in that hearing we make the decision to stop or read on, to distrust or believe the writer, to reject or accept the writer's view of the world. According to Donald Murray, voice seems the right term to describe the human qualities in style that are the most important qualities, those elements that allow a human being to speak from the page.

To develop your voice, the voice of your own texts, look to what you have written and are writing. Read it aloud as you write and after you have written. Note what works, what feels right to you as you do it. List those qualities and develop them. They are you, and your task, as an artist, is to bring your vision of our world to us in your words.

- **Read aloud what you are writing.**
- **Choose one quality you hear clearly**
- **Work to improve that quality**

Charles Darwin

I never study style: all that I do is to try to get the subject as clear as I can in my own head, and express it in the commonest language which occurs to me.

Jessica Anderson

It's my tone of voice. It's the writer's presence in the story.

John Heresy

The voice is the element over which you have no control; it's the sound of the person behind the work.

Somerset Maugham

I do not write as I want to; I write as I can.

Tennessee Williams

I do a lot of talking to myself when I write, trying out the sound of dialogue. Neighbors must think I always have a room full of company.

Published Texts: Using *Writers-at-Work*

A common complaint of both Literacy and ESL teachers and students is that existing ESL texts and stories written at lower literacy level are boring, lack sustenance and do not connect to the reader's life. It is difficult to find texts for suitable in terms of reading level and interest level for our lower literacy students. But, perhaps we have simply not been looking in the right place. *Writers-at-Work* is a published text of stories told by adult students who are learning to read to enjoy as well as write to tell their stories -- all in an authentic fashion. Content is more important than level in determining students' ability to read. If selections are relevant, because they connect to the reader's life, and are presented in an accessible way, students can read stories which at first glance may appear to be beyond their level. One of the most important things to remember in using such a publication is that reading is not a pronunciation activity; it is a meaning-making activity. Reading must be contextualized in discussion of the text content and structure so that students can establish expectations before reading and read interactively. This can be facilitated by prereading discussions and exercises linking text content to student experience, as well as by encouraging students to predict, guess and skip during reading and by relating the texts to their own lives after reading.

~Published materials that are nontraditional for classroom use~

***Literature*:** excerpts from books, short stories and poems, especially those by or about immigrants, are powerful ways to elicit student experience.

***Oral histories, autobiographies and biographies*:** accounts of real people's lives are engaging, especially when they are ordinary people with experiences similar to those of our students.

Student-produced publications: Voices (from Canada) and of course our in-house student authored publication.

Newspapers: articles can be used to develop themes or to introduce local issues

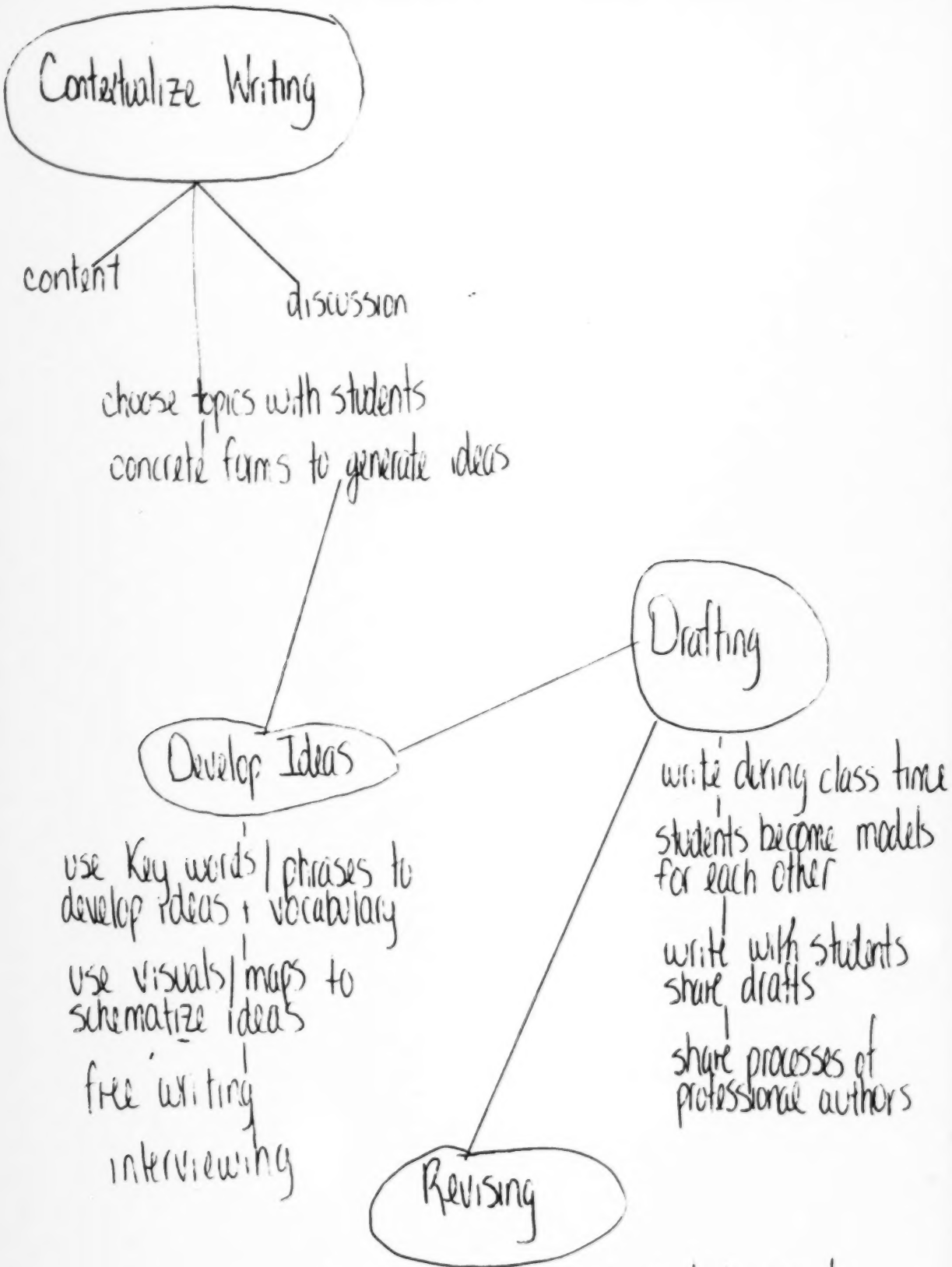
***Fables, Folktales and Proverbs*:** these genres are particularly effective in meeting the goal of using published materials to draw out students' own experience.

"Writing is a studio craft and should be treated as such. Just as an individual learns to be a watercolorist by watching, listening to and practicing with an accomplished painter, the adult writer learns to write by observing and practicing with other writers."

Peter Elbow (1973)

♦Conferencing Guide

Receive piece
Are you satisfied with your beginning?
What is your favorite part?
Can you tell me more about that part?
Did you reveal your feelings?
Does your title tell what the whole piece is about?
Is all your information a part of the topic?
Are you satisfied with the ending?
How did it sound when you read it out loud?
What changes do you plan to make?


Contextualize Writing
content
discussion
choose topics with students
concrete forms to generate ideas
Drafting
Develop Ideas
use Key words / phrases to develop ideas + vocabulary
use visuals / maps to schematize ideas
free writing
interviewing
write during class time
students become models for each other
write with students
share drafts
share processes of professional authors
Revising
decide whether a piece needs to be revised
making revising a social process
focus on content + ideas / maintain "voice"

The Art of Revision

Larry L. King

I work on each sentence until I'm satisfied with it and go on. I may rewrite one sentence nineteen times, and the next sentence eight times, and the next sentence three times. When I'm lucky, one sentence just once.

Richard Marius

I work through one draft to get to know my characters, to think about them, to wonder what they might do to reveal themselves first to me and then to my readers. And when I am done with that draft, I love to start all over again, putting my new knowledge to work in the new version. The point is that revising time is thinking time, and the more thought you can pour into your writing, the better that writing is likely to be as long as you do not inflate the form until it loses its design.

John Fowles

All the best cutting is done when one is sick of the writing.

Ellen Goodman

What makes me happy is rewriting. In the first draft you get your ideas and your theme clear, if you are using some kind of metaphor you get that established, and certainly you have to know where you're coming out. But the next time it's like cleaning house, getting rid of all the junk, getting things in the right order, tightening things up. I like the process of making writing neat.

Joan Didion

My writing is a process of rewriting, of going back and changing and filling in. In the rewriting process you discover what's going on, and you go back and bring it up to that point. Sometimes you'll just push through, indicate a scene or character, leave a space, then go back later and fill it in.

Checklist for Revision

Content

1. Are your ideas pertinent to the topic?
2. Are your ideas clearly stated?
3. Are they properly organized?
4. Are they logically developed? Have you used the proper connecting and transitional words?

Organization

1. Does each paragraph have a good topic sentence?
2. Is each key idea developed in a separate sentence?
3. Is each paragraph finished with a clear summary sentence?

Correctness

1. Is your work free of sentence errors (run-on sentences and sentence fragments)?
2. Have you capitalized and punctuated correctly?
3. Have you chosen your words with proper usage in mind?
4. Have you spelled them correctly?

✓ **Give students time to make revisions on stories.**

✓ **Begin conferencing with each one. Have the students read their stories to you. Read through first time, then go back and ask questions regarding the information. The students generally sense, while reading aloud, what needs to be revised.**

An author from *Writers at Work* shares how she revises

There was a High School, which was on my way to Grammar School. For nine years I went by it evryday. It was my last year in Grammar School. We all were dreaming to "climb over the gate to get to High School." We used to say that "The High School gate is getting taller to us to climb over." Because we had to pass two selecting tests which picked only one out of five elementary students. I had been studying hard at school, ~~gone~~ going to helping course after class, ~~stayed~~ staying up every night. Finally I ~~got that I deserved~~ my heart was paid off,. Yes! I was walking on air.

The following fall, we the freshest, students anxioussly, proudly, ~~back~~ started our first steps in the new school. From now on we had to wear white shirts or blouses every day. Little by little, it had become my second home. I always found warmth, joyessness and commitment. That time ~~is~~ ~~been~~ is become one of ~~my~~ the best time ~~in my life~~. Even ^ Although I left High School years ago, I'm now in America. If I've ever remembered a place striking my heart, that's my school, my High School.

It's just like yesterday. There's the main gate. On the right side was the garage for staff. On the left side was student's garage and canteen. I never ~~forget~~ better ~~where~~ in a sweltering afternoon, a glass of cold ice tea freshened my throat than any ~~throat even then any~~ soft drink I ever had now. But most of the time, I didn't come to the canteen buying foods because I want to save my money (which my mom for four years I couldn't get a familier face because I didn't not have a give for breakfast) to pay for a helping course after class. chance to buy things to eat. I used to save my money (my Mom gave me) for paying the helping courses after class.

A gym was behind the student's garage. We built a stage and it was

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for the annoual celebrations. I remember seeing affectionate rays in our teacher eyes on Teacher Honor Day. We contibuted our money to buy present, we volunteered to help decorate the stage and organize the ceremony. We did that just to remind them every year that they have been the special ones owed our honors and our respect now and ~~then~~ I owned still, forever Usually the presents weren't big but the meaning was countless that commitment wouldn't make most of the teacher to resign their job because of pooring rates. (We've how important among each other.)

Going straight from the gate ~~are~~ were classroom and adminstrative office and teachers' lounge. The building was structured arounb a square. In the middle was a flag pole. Every begining of class at the square, we had to stand in line before going to class, and sing the national anthem every Monday. The school is a three-staged building. I liked the white and blue painted in the classroom. We had lots of sun light and fresh air. The blackboard, desk were placed similarly as the classroom in the U.S. But two of us shared the same desk and we became friends We girls always liked to hide some sour fruit in our drawer, eating and chuckeling. The desk was long enough for two and I used to lay my elbow against, and holding my chin to congest our lesson or hiding my face to avoid the teacher appoint to repeat a lesson when we had some other visitors.

Right at the door was a bacony. I sometimes laid my notebook on to mutter the lesson. In the last year in H.S., I used to stand at the bacony looking at the sky praying God and worried about one day my mom had

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to close the coffee shop and I would lose my only one supporter. There was windy afternoon when I made a little flower and enjoy to watch it flying in the air.

Time went by. (I completed my three year and graduated) In four years, most of the morning I never had breakfast. I didn't tell any of my friend because I didn't want to have their pity. However, there was also some students they were suffering my problem. We were doing well. We know that and never felt any regret. On the International Lady Day, I was elected to be one of the five misses of the class for our best attitude and achivement. I graduated in 1988-1989. And I wanted to go for four year college to be a teacher. I wasn't a union communist member and was a Catholic. ① In my time, a new town - nursery was not fever for college and I'm 23 And I couldn't be accepted although I had the requiring scores. I tried the exam and I got the requiring time was up score. But I never had try I didn't have any news from school. And it was time for me to stop, from school. Before ② It didn't matter schooling, I had no support in four years in college and I didn't mind to wait for my teacher check it out.) There was nothing I could do. The H.S. gate now was closed in me. I've felt that the gate has been taller and taller because I couldn't learn as much as what my teacher want to get across "Life and academic knowledges". And I always owed them for the good characters, I possess they taught me. Persiting to school is still my inspiring wish. I've told myself to try my best. Now I'm in America. I felt that I At least I have a chance to improve myself. Daily I like to look at the children going to school, that I know we hope is long judged by me even if young although a thousand more year, passed by, or any they but always make herself.

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"Reading the word and learning how to write the word, so one can later read it are preceded by learning how to write the world, that is, having the experience of changing the world, and touching the world."

Freire & Macedo (1987)

At the core of Freire's work lies the notion that the role of adult educators, and that of all teachers, is to help students experience the transformative moments that give them compelling reasons to speak, to write, and to read.

"Critical thinking begins when people make the connections between their individual lives and social conditions. It ends one step beyond perception--toward the action people take to regain control over social structures detrimental to their lives."

Wallerstein (1983)

"Since writers do not seem to know beforehand what they will say, writing is a process through which meaning is created."

Vivian Zamel

Teachers with immigrant and non-immigrant students have discovered that students want to tell stories about their own experiences and that they can do this through their writing. Topics can vary from concerns and interests students have about their daily lives to the philosophical retelling of life-changing experiences. When students choose to publish their stories, other students can read them, and in this way, the reading and writing curriculum become intertwined and learner-centered. What is important is that students choose their own topics and celebrate their writing as respected authors.

it took mam long time to dry those tears from her face
and it's realy hard let me you sister
All those years they have been going to Ethopia with
hope of the nation to bry us paece yaeh
Women have been crying all over the world with hope and say that,
' peace' peace! peace!!! at list...
for our chaldren to have good education...

They move from Ethopia to Abuja still tolking abaut
that kind of seed peace talk !! peace talk !! yeah man
we don't want that peace anymore...
cause my mom said she been crying for since,
she was young girl

what we need is equarl right and justice...

I don't want peace more no
ceuase my mam have been crying for it,
till now no peace
you were young when it was happening till now
you can see going worts
now those days when amen see women crying
men say they are crying for peace some time
we blem them for nothing
but today when men crying the women themself
they don't know why men are crying but men
know why women are crying
we all know what we crying for
let me till you again

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"The craft of writing itself can be inspiring. It is intoxicating to play around with language, to hear the music of what we say, to see more clearly as we speak, to follow the unexpected paths when words take us."

Donald Murray
A Writer Teaches Writing

* **Free Writing**
write to see what surprises them on the page - share drafts
students should see unfinished writing, writing that doesn't work as well as writing that works, most of all, writing that may work if the writer writes and rewrites.

* **Autobiography**
write a brief autobiography (taking only 10 minutes or so) to introduce themselves.

* **Interview**
find out one interesting thing about the person they are interviewing and then to find out enough to develop the point (job-hobby-place they have lived).
when the interviews are completed the students can simply go around the room and introduce the persons they have interviewed, telling the most important thing about them.

"The strongest impulse to write is to make meaning of chaos, to celebrate, to record, to attempt to understand the world in which we are living. We should allow our students the opportunity to use writing to see and explore their worlds."

Donald Murray
A Writer Teaches Writing

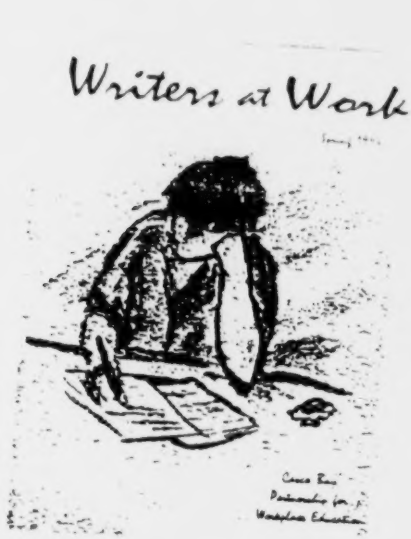
women and calture

women my cantry she do n't work
she sty home taker . babyes and
she taker insaid the house
cooking and cleaing
so whein she go outside or
if sambady com in the house even her hasbands
brather she havesto cover up by biack draiss
from her face to feet she cover also
women she have to siet anther room
and man anther room so
women allitime she is ander her hasband
she dous n't have right
man he can mariy 4 women
but he treats them equil haves to do
avry ting equil house gold and dress
any ting he have tyo do equil
so the wyives thet are to gater
no gelous halp to gater also they are friends
withes women she is ander her hasband
and if they have doughter when
she grow up her parents they bring hasbund to mary
she do know him and he do know her only by fot grap
so difrent cultar look like that

There is a lot we can learn about from the personal writing processes of professional authors. We might be able to help our students write more effectively by getting them to examine their own creative processes in light of the processes that professional writers employ. What we can learn from professional writers is that we don't need to restrict students to only one way of developing their writing.

"They don't have to tell me they have been published; I know it from the way they walk, the way they carry themselves. There is a new confidence, a new identity. They have something that was not there before; they have spoken in their own voice and they have been heard. They are writers. I'm always touched -- and amused -- by the effect that first publication has on beginning writers."

Donald Murray



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Why Write?

Heather McHugh
I began to write because I was too shy to talk, and too lonely not to send messages.

Alison Lurie
I found that it was boring not to write. It made the world emptier and thinner for me.

Edward Albee
I write to find out what I'm thinking about.

Cecelia Holland
One of the reasons a writer writes, I think, is that his stories reveal so much he never thought he knew.

Anne Morrow Lindberg
An experience isn't finished until it's written.

C. Day Lewis
We do not write in order to be understood, we write in order to understand.

Wallace Stegner
We do not write what we know; we write what we want to find out.

There is little question that these pieces of writing belong to the author. No one knows more about the subject that they have written about than the author. They are the expert and this expertise gives students ownership of the information. Ownership is the crucial ingredient if students are to be empowered by their learning. When one is an expert on a particular subject, one has the power of that information; with that power comes confidence and self-esteem. In a real Freirean sense, these students become the creators of knowledge; they are the experts.

➸ Authors from *Writers at Work* share their stories and reflect on writing and publishing ➸

➸ How did you decide what to write about?

➸ What was the process of writing your story?

➸ What did it mean for you to publish your story?

➸ How did you feel when you saw your story/ picture in *Writers at Work*?

➸ Has publishing your story had any effect on when or what you write?

➸ Has publishing or telling your story had any impact on how you feel about yourself or made any changes in your life?

CLIMBING OVER THE GATE

There was a High School, which was on my way to Grammar School. For nine years, I passed by it everyday. It was my last year in Grammar School and we all were dreaming to "climb over the gate to get to High School." We use to say that the High School gate is getting taller to us to climb over because we had to pass two selecting tests which would pick one out of five elementary students. I had been studying hard at school, staying up late at night. As a result, my work was paid off. Yes! I was walking on the air.

The following fall, we the freshest students anxiously, proudly, took our first steps in the new school. From now on, we had to wear white shirts or blouses every day. Little by little, my new school became my second home. I always found warmth, joyousness and commitment. That time was one of my best time in my life even though I left High School many years ago. If I've ever remember a place striking my heart, that's my school, my High School.

It's like yesterday. There, the main gate on the right side was the staff's garage. Student's and canteen were on the left. I will never forget, where in a sweltering afternoon, a glass of cold herbal ice tea freshened my throat better than any soft drink I'm ever having. But most of the time I didn't go there for foods because I chose to save my money (which my mom gave me for things to eat.) I would buy me (more) nice notebooks, and books.

A gym was behind the student's garage. We built a stage and it was actually for annual celebrations. I remember seeing affectionate rays sparkling from our teacher's eyes on the Teacher Honor Day. This 's been a big Holiday at any school in my country. We contributed our money to buy presents, volunteered to help decorate the stage and organize the ceremony. We did that to remind them every year they have

An author from *Writers at Work* reads her finished story.

accept into the union. Before I filled out the applications, my teacher had warned me about it. I decided to try it anyway. As a mater of fact, I got the required score since I had my friend's Mom find it. But never did I have any respond from the school. Then the difficult condition confronted me, I wouldn't have any financial help for those years in college whether or not I was accepted. It's a touchy situation for most of youngster in my country. I desperately drop down my dream.

The High School gate was now closed in me. I have a feeling that it's getting taller to me because I could only learn a tiny sand in the desert of our teacher's knowledge "Life and Academy". But I'm proudly said that I've owed them so much for the good characteristics I possess. And persisting to school is still in my inspiring wish although I used to take courses without putting all my mind. I hesitated and was afraid of being embarrassed due to the obstacles in language and miserable of my life. I'm thankful to Adult Education and Work Site Program where I've found help and motivation. I'm living in the U.S.A. I know and hope that no one is being judged by her religion or anything but her real self. It's 1996, I realize there's a gate - a college gate - a head of me. I have to climb over on my own feet with my every single cells of effort. No one is going to lift me up. Can I overcome it? I strongly believe in me. And I know God will watch my steps through my journey and He will bless me.

Daily life I enjoyed viewing children going to school that always make me feel young forever even if a thousand more years passed by.

been the special ones owed our honor and our respect now and still, forever. Usually the presents weren't really financial valuable but the meanings was countless that the commitment wouldn't make most of the teacher resign their jobs in spite of poor rates. We've learned how important we were to each other.

Going straight from the gate were classrooms, administrative office and teachers lounge. The building was structured around a square. In the middle was a flag pole. Every beginning of class, at the square, we stood in line before coming up. Every Monday we were to sing the national anthem and salute the communist flag. The school was a three staged building. I liked the white and blue painted in the room. We had lots of sun light and fresh air. The blackboard and desk were placed similarly like they are in the U.S. But the two of us shared the same desk and we became very close friends. We girls always liked hiding some sour fruit in the drawer, eating and chuckling. The desk was big enough for me to sneak away my teacher view when she wanted to assign me to read something when we have other visitors.

Right at the door was a balcony. I sometimes laid my books and muttered the lessons. The last years in High School, I used to stand at the balcony looking up at the sky praying God, worried about losing my unique supporter if my Mom had to close the coffee shop. There were windy afternoon, when I make little flower, let them float freely in the air with my souls.

Time went by. In four years, most of the time I never had breakfast. I didn't tell any of my friends because I didn't want to have their pity; However, there were also some who were suffering my problem. We were doing well. We know that and never felt any regret. On the International Lady Day, I was elected to be one of the five misses of the clan for our best attitude and achievement. I graduated on 1988-1989. Then I desired to go for four years college to be an English teacher. In my time, a non-communist union member was discriminated against getting to be in certain fields like police and teacher. Because I'm a Catholic despite of my good conduct record I didn't

Techniques for title writing

- write titles that are too long, then cut
- try one-word titles - few will work but they will help you focus on the key words in the piece.
- write with nouns and verbs
- make the nouns and verbs as specific as possible
- make the verbs as simple, direct and active as possible
- combine the elements that fit together in the story in the title
- combine the elements that are at war with each other in the title. many good titles contain the tension or the forces within the piece in the title.
- if you can't avoid it, use a double title with a colon and a second title that qualifies it.
- listen to the language of your subject and the voice you think you will use in writing about it, to hear words and phrases that might be used ind in the title.
- keep cutting until you have the title as short as possible.
- continue to check back to your subject - make sure your title is honest and helps you -- and the reader -- understand the subject.

Assessment: Reflecting on your writing

Choose a piece of your writing and include the following:

- **what you selected and why**
- **what you learned about writing these pieces and how**
- **improvements, strengths and weaknesses in your writing**
- **piece of writing that best represents your work and why**

Portfolios:

From the beginning of the course, I would encourage students to keep portfolios. I will emphasize that this method allows and encourages the students to take charge of their learning; they decide what they want to revise and edit, what they want to present for publication, what they want to record and remember and where they wish to go in terms of their own learning goals.

Observation of Writing Behaviors, Skills, Processes

	Piece: Date:	Piece: Date:	Piece: Date:
Content * ideas are well stated, clearly expressed, and supported with concrete, relevant detail * conveys main idea/intended message * maintains personal 'voice'/style			
Organization * presents information sequentially * presents ideas that are well organized and developed * contains effective transitions * contains clear introduction, development of ideas, and conclusion * writing is cohesive throughout			
Word Choice * appropriate use; richness of expression * uses figurative language - employs simple analogies and/or metaphors * vocabulary is precise			
Grammar and Sentence Structure * uses a variety of sentence types and lengths * uses consistent verb tenses * uses accurate word order in sentences * uses accurate form of plural nouns			
Revision * adds information/detail to clarify * deletes irrelevant supportive facts/details * refines word choice * uses newly acquired vocabulary * seeks peer assistance			

A Student's Self-Reflection

Select (5) pieces of your writing:

(1) Shows your growth as a 'learner' (as a reader and writer) - how does it show your growth?

(2) Your favorite piece of - why is it your favorite? what makes it your favorite?

(3) The most difficult piece - what made it difficult?

(4) The piece you are the most proud of - why does it make you feel proud?

(5) A piece you want to share - why did you select this particular piece?

HOLISTIC SCORING GUIDE

. Little or no topic development, organization, and/ or details . Little or no awareness of audience and/ or task . Errors in surface features seriously interfere with communication	
. Random and/or weak topic development, unfocused, limited details . Poor awareness of audience and/or task . Errors in surface features are disproportionate to the length and complexity of the piece.	
. Rudimentary development of topic and supporting details, limited focus . Simplistic vocabulary . Errors in surface features are disproportionate to the length and complexity of the piece	
. Moderately fluent, adequate details, focused . Acceptable vocabulary . Some errors in surface features that do not interfere with communication	
. Fluent, fully developed . Evidence of voice and strong details . Few errors in surface features relative to length or complexity	
. Topic and details richly developed . Careful but subtle organization . Effective and/or rich language . Accomplished control of surface features	

Using Literacy to Make Change

Examples	Form of Action
Individual, Personal	
internal	♦ gains in self confidence ♦ affective change
external	♦ joining softball team ♦ becoming active in community/school organizations
literacy-related	♦ publishing writing ♦ reading work at public events ♦ changing uses of literacy in everyday life ♦ affirming identity through use of first language
In Class	♦ determining curriculum content ♦ asserting preference for activities ♦ addressing issues of classroom dynamics (attendance, uneven participation, use of L1 vs. L2, handling of personal information) ♦ rehearsing for outside action ♦ class publications or productions (photo stories, anthologies of student writings)
In Site	♦ participating in evaluation/decision-making ♦ participating in hiring ♦ participating in advocacy activities
In Family	♦ diversifying literacy uses ♦ changing dynamics around literacy (becoming independent of children, gaining confidence in helping chidren) ♦ gaining pride in first language/culture ♦ reinforcing home culture and use of L1
In Relation to School	♦ participating in school events ♦ advocating for child/children
In Relation to Immediate Community	♦ joining community organizations or activities (parents' group, action to keep school open) ♦ taking on new responsibilities (helping others with literacy tasks dealing with bureaucracy, etc.) ♦ strengthening community ties (e.g., through newsletter, networking)
In Broader Community	♦ participating in funding hearings ♦ participating in demonstrations on bilingual education ♦ writing letters to the editor ♦ writing letters to/petitioning officials

Progress Checklist

Name _____ **Date** _____

	Before cycle	During cycle	End of cycle
Personal, affective changes:			
♦ feeling safe, feeling at ease			
♦ willing to take risks			
♦ longer attention span			
♦ ability to identify personal learning goals			
♦ ability to address personal problems			
♦ other _____			
Social changes in the classroom/among peers:			
♦ increased self-direction of learning			
♦ increased participation			
♦ self-monitoring of participation			
♦ ability to help and support peers			
♦ ability to express opinion or disagree			
♦ ability to take on new roles (leadership)			
♦ ability to reflect on classroom dynamics			
♦ other _____			
Social changes outside the classroom:			
♦ participation in community activities, organizations			
♦ increased responsibility			
♦ social networking			
♦ using community resources			
♦ assisting, supporting peers			
♦ other _____			
Changes in relation to children's schooling:			
♦ more support at home			
♦ more contact with school			
♦ advocacy on children's behalf			
♦ participation in parent groups			
♦ other _____			
Changes in writing			
♦ mechanics (letter formation, spelling, etc.)			
♦ length of written pieces			
♦ ability to generate ideas			
♦ ability to draft and revise			
♦ elaboration of ideas			
♦ organization			
♦ ability to write about personal experience			
♦ ability to write analytically			
Changes in reading			
♦ predicting			
♦ using prior knowledge			
♦ skimming, previewing			
♦ using context			
♦ guessing			
♦ sound/letter/word identification			
♦ awareness of strategies			
♦ ability to relate reading to personal experience			
♦ critical reading			
♦ other _____			
Changes in oral language use			
♦ comprehension			
♦ ability to ask for clarification			
♦ clarity of pronunciation			
♦ immediacy of response			
♦ length of utterances			
♦ taking the initiative			
♦ taking risks			
♦ ability to express opinions			
♦ ability to question/challenge			
♦ other _____			
Metacognitive changes			
♦ awareness of progress/goals			
♦ awareness of reading/writing processes			
♦ ability to monitor and choose strategies			
♦ ability to ask for assistance			
♦ ability to make choices about language use			
♦ other _____			
Changes in uses of literacy			
♦ functional uses in specific contexts			
• consumer choice			
• employment			
• housing			
• banking/money			
• health care			
♦ using literacy for personal expression			
♦ using literacy in family interactions			
♦ using literacy for learning			
♦ using literacy for advocacy			
♦ increased independence in literacy use			
♦ using literacy to understand social context			
♦ using literacy to question and challenge			
♦ other _____			

Progress Checklist

Name_____ **Date**_____

	Before cycle	During cycle	End of cycle
Personal, affective changes:			
◆ feeling safe, feeling at ease			
◆ willing to take risks			
◆ longer attention span			
◆ ability to identify personal leaning goals			
◆ ability to address personal problems			
◆ other _____			
Social changes in the classroom/ among peers:			
◆ increased self-direction of learning			
◆ increased participation			
◆ self-monitoring of participation			
◆ ability to help and support peers			
◆ ability to express opinion or disagree			
◆ ability to take on new roles (leadership)			
◆ ability to reflect on classroom dynamics			
◆ other _____			
Social changes outside the classroom:			
◆ participation in community activities, organizations			
◆ increased responsibility			
◆ social networking			
◆ using community resources			
◆ assisting, supporting peers			
◆ other _____			
Changes in relation to children's schooling:			
◆ more support at home			
◆ more contact with school			
◆ advocacy on children's behalf			
◆ participation in parent groups			
◆ other _____			
Changes in writing:			
◆ mechanics (letter formation, spelling, etc.)			
◆ length of written pieces			
◆ ability to generate ideas			
◆ ability to draft and revise			
◆ elaboration of ideas			
◆ organization			
◆ ability to write about personal experience			
◆ ability to write analytically			
◆ other _____			

STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSE

1. What was the most important reason you were motivated to come to this class?

2. What did you like most about this class?

3. What did you like least about it?

4. What could be done to improve this class?

5. What do you think is the most important thing you've learned in this class?

✍ ***Writers at Work*** **interview questions:**

- Tell me about your piece
- What did it mean to you to write it?
- Why did you write it?
- Did your story change much over time? Were there many drafts?
- What has it meant to have that piece published?
- How has writing changed for you over time - since the time you published your story?
- What is it like to have your story published?
- Has your life changed in any way because of publishing your writing?
- Does publishing your writing relate in any way to the work you do in the workplace?
- Do you have any other responses/ reactions?

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